

*Government Orders*

Soon after the House was recalled in that same month, the government did place a resolution before it concerning the Persian Gulf crisis. That draft resolution originally was merely an effort by the government to pat itself on the back and try to get *carte blanche* to pursue whatever course it saw fit. It was only through the efforts of the opposition critic for external affairs and others in our party that the government finally agreed to modify its motion, agreeing to an expanded role for parliamentary debate and for greater recognition of the role of the United Nations.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution, modified through efforts by Liberals, unequivocally condemned Saddam Hussein for invading Kuwait. Canadians were shocked and dismayed when the NDP voted against it.

Mr. Speaker, we are proud of the efforts of our critic for external affairs who has travelled to Iraq with members of other parties to seek the release on humanitarian grounds of Canadian hostages being held there and in Kuwait, and we are pleased to learn today that a number of these Canadian hostages are going to be released.

**An hon. member:** No thanks to Joe.

[*Translation*]

**M. Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, we have consistently condemned the unlawful invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. We in the Official Opposition believe that the Conservative government failed to put the necessary emphasis on the role that can be played by the United Nations in resolving this crisis. We also feel that the government abdicated its duty to inform Canadians, fully and on a regular basis, on developments in the Persian Gulf, and to involve them, through their elected representatives, in this country's decisions.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, the failure of the government to keep Canadians informed is not only wrong, it is a departure from the precedent established here by my party when in government. More than 40 years ago, following the attack by North Korean troops on South Korea, Lester B. Pearson, then the Secretary of State for External Affairs, reported every day to the House of Commons.

There was extensive discussion of that crisis in the House which was then sitting.

Mr. Speaker, in the summer of 1950 the House of Commons was prorogued, that is, the session was formally ended. And on the eve of that prorogation, Mr. Pearson pledged that if necessary the House would be recalled to deal with the crisis. On August 19, 1950, the House was recalled for an emergency debate and members of Parliament were given a full opportunity to discuss the Korean conflict and Canada's role in it.

**An hon. member:** What a difference, the right Prime Minister.

[*Translation*]

**M. Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, the crisis was mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. Both Chambers were asked to adopt legislation which subsequently provided the basis for Canada's participation in the Korean War under the aegis of the UN.

[*English*]

I want to emphasize that both Houses of Parliament were recalled to participate in a debate on the Korean crisis and to actually vote on legislation authorizing the participation of Canadian Armed Forces in that crisis, all in a comprehensive manner. This stands in sharp contrast to the approach taken by this Conservative government in the current Persian Gulf crisis, starting back last summer when the government refused to recall this House to discuss the crisis before it sent troops to the Persian Gulf, a departure from the precedent created by Liberals during the crisis of the Korean War.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, more than 40 years later, the Liberals stand for the same approach, full consultation, open debate in and decision by Parliament and involvement with and through the United Nations.

This government has a duty to consult and seek the approval of the House of Commons during such crises. When Canadian lives are at stake, the Canadian people deserve nothing less. Yet, what do we see from this government? As I said, the Prime Minister authorized the sending of Canadian men and women to the Persian Gulf, into a battle zone, more than two weeks before the United Nations authorized the use of force.